



U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary

F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., Chairman

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News Advisory

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House Judiciary Committee Approves Landmark Bills Fighting the War on Terror

Legislation Approved Creates Terrorist Tribunals and Updates Surveillance Law

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The House Judiciary Committee today approved two landmark bills fighting the War on Terror. The first, H.R. 6054, the “Military Commissions Act,” establishes terrorist tribunals and was approved without amendment by a 20-to-19 margin. All 17 Democrats today voted against this legislation, which overwhelmingly passed the House Armed Services Committee last week by a 52-to-8 margin.

The second bill, H.R. 5825, the “Electronic Surveillance Modernization Act,” updates and reforms the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) to fight the modern terrorist threat and provides increased congressional and FISA Court oversight of surveillance operations. After adopting five amendments, the Committee approved this legislation by a 20-to-16 margin with all Democrats again voting in opposition. Both of these bills are expected on the House floor next week.

House Judiciary Committee Chairman stated, “This Committee today approved two major bills to fight the War on Terror, unfortunately, without a single vote from my Democratic colleagues. The terrorist tribunals legislation provides congressional authorization to establish a fair and effective procedure to prosecute dangerous terrorists. In taking this action we provide terrorists – such as Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9-11 attacks – the fairness and legal protections that none of their innocent victims ever enjoyed. The Committee also took a major step in updating and reforming FISA – something that will provide the intelligence community and others with greater agility and flexibility as they try to thwart our determined and dangerous terrorist enemies.”

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